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Sears, Roebuck and Co. (ticker: S, exchange: New York Stock Exchange) News Release - 13-Apr-1999

Current
Stock Price

Stock Chart

News

Releases

Analyst
Coverage

Direct

Purchase

Stock Plan

Financial
Reports

Calendar of
Events

Information
Request

Email Alerts

Spinoffs -
tax basis

Sears Launches New Web Site For Do-It-Yourselfers

HOFFMAN ESTATES, Ill., April 13 /PRNewswire/ -- Sears, Roebuck and Co. is going online with the world's largest selection of parts and accessories for household appliances, electronics and other equipment at www.sears.com/partsdirect. With Sears PartsDirect, do-it-yourselfers now have access to more than 4.2 million parts from 400 manufacturers for household items such as appliances, power tools, lawn and garden equipment and home electronics -- even for items not purchased or sold at Sears. The site also contains owner's manuals for most major brands.

The new E-Commerce site is an extension of Sears PartsDirect, the nation's largest provider of parts and accessories for household appliances, electronics and other equipment. In the past, parts service has been accessible via a toll-free number, 1-800-4-MY-HOME which receives more than 10 million calls annually. The web site helps consumers identify the correct part for their appliance through the use of an appliance model number locator and detailed diagrams. Customers can view a diagram simply by entering the model number of the item on the PartsDirect site. Over 70,000 easy-to-use diagrams help the consumer understand where a part is located in a given appliance, before ordering the part they need. The diagrams also have an option which allows viewers to zoom in and out across the image.

"Our toll-free number has been a lifesaver for many of our customers and a phenomenal success," says Kevin J. Callahan, director of PartsDirect for Sears HomeCentral(SM), "but some callers had difficulty describing the parts they needed over the phone. The big advantage this site offers is that it contains 70,000 detailed diagrams that go back 10 years, and the most comprehensive parts lists from more than 400 manufacturers including Kenmore, Whirlpool, Maytag, GE and Black and Decker."

If a diagram is not available for a particular model number, a parts listing will be given. A consumer can send an e-mail or call PartsDirect at 1-800-4-MY-HOME if they are having difficulty identifying the part or finding a model number. Callers to the toll-free number will speak with parts consultants who can answer their questions and help them identify the correct part to order.

"Launching the PartsDirect site is a significant move for the company as we aggressively grow our online position," said Alice M. Peterson, vice president and general manager of Sears Online. "The PartsDirect site is an important component in one of Sears goals -- to be the definitive online

source for homeowners. Sears has the largest selection of major appliances, including the top six best-selling brands, the largest fleet of service vehicles and technicians in the country and a superior home improvement business that is unparalleled in the industry. These strengths, together with Sears credit services, breadth of information and professional level of customer service, differentiate Sears from the competition in a powerful and meaningful way. We want to be the Internet destination for homeowners, regardless of where they live, what they need or when they want to shop."

Sears PartsDirect inventory carries nearly all parts for household appliances, electronics and other equipment which is less than 10 years old and includes many hard-to-find parts for products that date back to the 1960s and 1970s. Customers can pay for parts with their Sears Card or another major credit card. All transactions are secured using Secured Socket Layer (SSL) technology.

After placing an order, customers are given an order number that allows them to check the status of their order on the site. Customers can enter their order number and zip code on the order status page to retrieve information on whether the part is in stock and the approximate arrival day of the order. Parts ordered via the web site or the 1-800-4-MY-HOME number are shipped directly to the customer's home within five days.

Sears said earlier in the year that it was focused on becoming the definitive online source for homeowners, including product offerings, home services scheduling and information and special promotions, and today's announcement represents the company's next step in this strategic plan.

Online purchases are expected to reach \$18.1 billion this year, according to Forrester Research, and more than 13 percent of homeowners already are looking to the Internet for help and information according to National Home Center News.

The 1-800-4-MY-HOME phone service is available from 6 a.m.-11 p.m. CST and will continue to be available to callers seven days a week.

Sears, Roebuck and Co. is a leading U.S. retailer of apparel, home, and automotive products and related services. Sears PartsDirect and Sears Online are businesses within Sears Home Services, a division of Sears, Roebuck and Co. Sears Home Services is the nation's leading home repair and improvement provider with more than 15,000 home repair and improvement specialists serving more than 15 million homes annually from 800 locations. More information about Sears is available at the company's web site at www.sears.com. More than 2,300 Craftsman tools are available for sale online.

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